



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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Please note: The North Dakota Department of Health is offering the following story about a Women's Way client in conjunction with National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October)

Getting Regular Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings Sets an Example for Others

BISMARCK, N.D. – It is a crisp fall day, and Frances Allard-Abbott, an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, Dunseith, N.D., is busy in her kitchen among the many Mason jars and lids she is using for canning pickles. She flits around the small room, amidst the pings and pops of sealing jars, making her signature salsa and drawing the canning from the hot water bath. On her walls, and adorning nearly every space on her refrigerator, are photos of her children and grandchildren. She cherishes her family and shows her love by taking care of herself. Frances wants to be around for others so she makes time to get yearly mammograms and regular Pap tests.

“Women are the life givers, the caregivers. We are the first teachers. We need to get these yearly mammograms and regular Pap tests to show our families that we care; that our health is important. We need to show them by example, by getting in and doing these screenings,” she said.

Frances uses the *Women's Way* program to help pay for her breast and cervical cancer screenings. *Women's Way* is North Dakota's breast and cervical cancer early detection program. *Women's Way* provides low- or no-cost mammograms and Pap tests for women ages 40 through 64 who meet income criteria, are underinsured, or who have no insurance.

Frances learned about *Women's Way* through Indian Health Services. As a respected elder, she lets other women know about the program and the importance of regular screenings.

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“If you catch the cancers early, then you have a better chance. I know some women think mammograms hurt, but it is okay. It is one minute of your life. It is one minute that could save your life,” Frances said. “Taking care of our health sets an example for others.”

Since 2003, Frances has faithfully used *Women’s Way* to get her breast and cervical cancer screenings. She plans to continue setting the example of self-care. “I have a lot of things to do. I have children and grandchildren. I want to be here to enjoy them,” Frances said.

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness month. Statistics show that one out of eight women in North Dakota will get breast cancer in her lifetime. According to The American Cancer Society, an estimated 440 North Dakota women will be newly diagnosed with breast cancer this year.

Women’s Way may provide a way to pay for mammograms and Pap tests. North Dakota women ages 40 through 64 may be eligible for clinical breast exams, Pap tests and pelvic exams. North Dakota women ages 50 through 64 also may be eligible for mammograms. *Women’s Way* has screened 8,848 women since 1997. Through these screenings, 143 breast cancers and 800 cervical cancers and pre-cancers have been detected.

When the canning is done, the day isn’t done for Frances. She has several sewing and beading projects that still need attention. Her hard work and her strong belief in family and staying healthy teach all around her to make time to care.

For more information about *Women’s Way*, call 1-800-44 WOMEN or visit the *Women’s Way* website at www.ndhealth.gov/womensway.

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This news release and a photo of Frances Allard-Abbott are available for download at <http://www.health.state.nd.us/womensway/mediaservices/info/media%20kit/wwmediakit.html>

Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at www.nddohpressroom.gov.